

giving additional food and is working to step up their provision. Many people, my family included, are giving financially to take care of people in need in this moment. Oklahomans are tough and we're caring, but I'm incredibly frustrated that it's come to this.

Regardless of your thoughts on the number of Federal workers on the payroll, surely we can agree that the families currently employed should be protected as much as possible. These families have carried the stress of this pay cut for a year now. For months they have wondered when and if it would come, and now it's here.

I've written numerous letters to the Department of Defense, asking them to exhaust every option in sequester before they reduce worker time and pay. To their credit, they've replied to all of my correspondence in writing within days, something other agencies in this executive branch could certainly learn from.

I've personally spoken face-to-face with Secretary Panetta, with now-Secretary Hagel, General Dempsey, and Comptroller Hale to find out about other opportunities to save money, like the unobligated balances in the defense budget. I asked for their reconsideration of operations that function on working capital funds. If you're not familiar with that, some departments pay other departments to do their work. Those departments should not be directly affected. The cuts have already happened in the other department. We're cutting twice when we hit on the working capital fund locations.

I asked Secretary Hagel to give more authority to individual installations to make local decisions on spending reductions rather than mandating cuts from the Pentagon.

Congress has already worked with the DOD to reprogram funds and to give maximum flexibility to the Pentagon to protect workers, just like we did with FAA and Homeland Security.

I'm grateful, I am, that the Pentagon has found a way to reduce furloughs from 24 days to 14 days and now to a maximum of 11. But I want to find a way that we can end these furloughs all together for our civilian workers as soon as possible. Three months with a 20 percent cut is tough.

In my last conversation with Senator Hagel, I was pleased to hear that he's still working on these ways. I urge him to continue to cut waste, not worker pay. It's time that we get this issue resolved.

#### RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

#### AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. AMODEI) at noon.

#### PRAYER

Chaplain Major Howard Bell, 932nd Airlift Wing, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois, offered the following prayer:

Almighty God, we ask for Your divine blessing upon this Congress. We ask that You bless them as they share the privilege that befuddled Moses, challenged Churchill, and has driven some to amazing achievement—leadership.

We thank You for choosing leaders with integrity, who ably lead this country, who motivate us in our work, and ultimately promote freedom in the world.

Give to this Congress the wisdom of Solomon in the decisions they must make; the courage of David when faced with "giants in the land;" the strength of Samson to endure the daily grind; the patience of Job to deal with the ever-changing demands placed upon them; and the compassion of a parent with a hurting child.

Almighty God, we have confidence in our President, our Congress, and in our Nation—and especially in You as we boldly make these requests, trusting in You that they will be accomplished. It is in Your holy name we pray.

Amen.

#### THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to clause 1, rule I, I demand a vote on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8, rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

#### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Will the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. HARTZLER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mrs. HARTZLER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

#### WELCOMING CHAPLAIN MAJOR HOWARD BELL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Chaplain Howard Bell who led us in the opening prayer.

The tradition of the opening prayer began with the Continental Congress in 1774 when Reverend Jacob Duche of Philadelphia offered a prayer at its start. Since that time, the House has enjoyed over 200 years of service from the Chaplaincy of the House and our guest chaplains.

Chaplain Bell has faithfully served in churches in Missouri and Illinois since 1988. While serving his church, Chaplain Bell was commissioned a chaplain captain in the United States Air Force Reserves in 2002 and was assigned as an Individual Mobilization Augmentation to the 375th Air Wing at Scott Air Force Base.

In 2008, he was deployed to Afghanistan and assigned to the 455th Air Expeditionary Force at Bagram Airfield as the hospital chaplain, where he received the Army Commendation Medal. Since then, he has received the Air Force Commendation Medal, the International Security Assistance Force Medal, and the Afghanistan Enduring Freedom Medal. Chaplain Bell was also appointed wing chaplain of the 932nd Airlift Wing, where he supervises the ministry for nearly 1,200 airmen in the wing.

He is married to Reverend Penelope Barber and has two children, David and Rachel. Currently, he is the pastor of the Farina United Methodist Church in Farina, Illinois, and of the Louisville United Methodist Church in Louisville, Illinois.

It is my honor to welcome a man who encompasses so many of the wonderful qualities of the people of Illinois, and I would like to personally thank Chaplain Bell for offering this morning's prayer.

#### ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair will entertain 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on either side of the aisle.

#### STOP THE FURLOUGHES

(Mr. FORBES asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FORBES. Mr. Speaker, last week, more than 650,000 DOD civilians began the first of their 11 unpaid furlough days.

Our military—our men and women in uniform—and the civilians who support